



U.S. Army
Corps of
Engineers
St. Paul District

DEVILS LAKE EMERGENCY OUTLET NEWSLETTER

Issue #2 June 1998



North Dakota
State Water
Commission

340 People Attend Scoping Meetings; Public Will Have Opportunity to Comment on Results

This newsletter briefly summarizes the results of seven scoping meetings held during the week of March 23, 1998. The full results of these meetings will be presented and analyzed in a draft Scoping Document which will be sent in July to everyone on the Corps of Engineers' mailing list. Your comments on that draft document will be requested.

Meeting Purpose and Locations

Approximately 340 people attended seven scoping meetings sponsored jointly by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) and the North Dakota State Water Commission (NDSWC). The purpose of the meetings was to obtain public input on the scope of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) being prepared for the proposed emergency outlet from Devils Lake to

the Sheyenne River. This scoping process is required in order to be in conformance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

The public scoping meetings followed several months of discussions and correspondence with local, State, and Federal agencies, public officials, and other organizations, which resulted in the identification of several scoping issues. In addition, consultations are ongoing with Canada and the Spirit Lake Nation.

The meetings were held at seven North Dakota locations: Valley City, Lisbon, Cooperstown, Spirit Lake Casino, Devils Lake, Grand Forks, and Fargo. These locations were chosen to allow a range of interests to be represented from both the Devils Lake flood impact area and the downstream Sheyenne River and Red River areas.

(continued on next page)



Meeting facilitator gives project overview at public scoping meeting in Fargo.

Meeting Format

Each meeting began with an introductory presentation that gave an overview of the purpose of the EIS, the definition of scoping, effects of Devils Lake flooding since 1993, outlet alternatives previously evaluated, a description of the Peterson Coulee route, and potential parameters for operating the proposed outlet.

Participants were then given information on the various ways they could submit their public scoping comments, which included: (1) a chart listing the previously identified scoping issues that participants could use to prioritize the issues; (2) a chart for listing and ranking additional issues; (3) the opportunity to participate in a question-and-answer/discussion session; (4) a comment form that could be submitted at the meeting or mailed to the Corps, and (5) the opportunity to submit detailed written comments to the Corps by letter or electronic mail.

Summary of Meeting Results

At the meetings, 210 participants completed and submitted ranking charts and 14 additional issues were submitted. The Corps also received nearly 40 written public comments.

For all meeting locations combined, participants ranked the top six scoping issues as:

- Downstream water quality
- Downstream water quantity
- Water quantity in Devils Lake
- Downstream erosion and sedimentation
- Economic factors
- Operational factors

Participants in and around Devils Lake placed more emphasis on water quantity and water quality in Devils Lake, Devils Lake agricultural impacts, economic impacts, and operational issues. Participants from downstream areas stressed downstream water quantity and quality, downstream erosion and sedimentation, and groundwater concerns.

Additional issues submitted by participants included:

- Impacts on the existing and future business community around Devils Lake.
- Lower basin watershed flooding and the impact on farmers, especially during spring seeding time.

- Additional irrigation capabilities of the Sheyenne River (possibility of Garrison Diversion dilution of Devils Lake water in Sheyenne River to be used for irrigation).
- Erosion of diversion channel from Horace to or around West Fargo.
- Cost/benefit of 300 cubic feet per second release rate.
- Imperative to get emergency clause to expedite process.
- Downstream homeowners' septic systems (high water table with more water).
- Health effects related to water quality degradation.
- Upper basin water storage concerns (lower basin residents want more water stored in the upper basin, while upper basin residents feel no more land is available and current storage adversely impacts agricultural land).

Scoping Document

The Corps is currently analyzing all the information received from the scoping meetings. The results of their analysis will be presented in a draft Scoping Document, which will identify the issues to be studied in the EIS.

Volume 1 of the draft Scoping Document will discuss NEPA and the scoping process, the purpose and need for the proposed project, the geographic scope of analysis, alternatives, and issues to be analyzed in the EIS. Volume 2 of the Document will contain copies of all the written comments submitted to the Corps.

How You Can Comment

The draft Scoping Document will be mailed in July to everyone on the Corps' mailing list (approximately 1,000 people). If you received this newsletter in the mail, you will also be receiving the draft Scoping Document. In addition, the draft Scoping Document will be placed in the local information centers listed on the next page and on the Corps' web site.

Once the draft Scoping Document has been mailed out, a 30-day public comment period will be announced. Your comments can be submitted by mail, telephone, or e-mail to the Corps representatives listed on the next page.

The final Scoping Document will be released in Fall 1998.

How to Submit Comments or Get More Information

Write, e-mail or telephone:

<i>Robert Anfang</i>	612-290-5268	robert.a.anfang@usace.army.mil
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Scoping Document Will Be Available (in July) At:



- ➔ *U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District* (see above)
- ➔ *North Dakota State Water Commission*, 900 East Boulevard, Bismarck, ND 58505-0850
phone: 701-328-1050

Local Information Centers*

Devils Lake Carnegie Library, 623 4th Avenue, Devils Lake, ND 58301-2421phone: 701-662-2220
Fargo Public Library, 102 3rd Street North, Fargo, ND 58102-4899phone: 701-241-1491
Grand Forks Library, 2110 Library Circle, Grand Forks, ND 58201-6324phone: 701-772-8116
Griggs County Library, 902 Burrel Avenue, Cooperstown, ND 58425-2500phone: 701-797-2214
Lisbon Public Library, 409 Forest Street, Lisbon, ND 58054-0569phone: 701-683-5174
Tribal Community Center, Fort Totten, ND 58335phone: 701-766-4221
Valley City Public Library, 410 Central Avenue North, Valley City, ND 58072-2949phone: 701-845-3821

*Please call each location for hours of operation.

For Other Information:

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Web Sites:

Army Corps web site:
www.MVP.USACE.ARMY.MIL
NDSWC web site:
www.water.swc.state.nd.us





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